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the need to have more schools looking at that, all are within the same category of schools that we're looking to to address their situations differently. This, I believe... Senator Wehrbein came up to me as I was on the mike. He is the Chairman of the Appropriations Committee. I think it's Senator Wehrbein's job to make us aware. It certainly wasn't something I was aware of or had thought of. But it seems to me that it's a perfect fit. It's about smaller schools, about rural schools. The Hardship Fund was looking to meet an emergency. That has only been there one year. To say that it's never been used does not mean that some of that money would not be needed. It was only there one year. It has not been used. But we are seeing today that there was no other way to make the money available for schools who are wishing to move in the direction of unification or consolidation. The money was not there. Members of the Appropriations Committee, the Revenue Committee, Education Committee, speaking with the Governor, knew that that was not there. To say that this is in competition with other things out there, I don't see it that way. It's directly at the same area, the same schools, the same size schools who are looking to merge or consolidate. So I sure hope that this doesn't end up being a we win, they win, I don't win, who wins. I think instead that this addresses a current need that we've recognized. It was recognized. Senator Baker considered making it his priority bill. He did not. We asked the Speaker to make it a Speaker priority bill. He did. So we on the Education Committee, there were no votes opposed, as Senator Brashear had indicated, but we saw it as an important issue, and talked about, many times, where we could see putting this. It's not raising the taxes. The money is there. It's a transfer. It comes as a recommendation from the Chair of the Appropriations Committee. And so I would hope that you would see fit to end this debate, decide up or down that we want to meet the needs of these schools, and make the amount of money there for them who are looking to unify. I talked about the districts to Senator Beutler that I knew specifically. We have gotten calls from a number of districts who are looking to unify. But the question is on the incentive money. Time and time again they call, because there's the cost of the band uniforms, as Senator Stuhr had raised...

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD PRESIDING